

Staff Wellbeing Guide

July 2023

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Cooper Park Community Garden
Cover image: Cooper Park, Bellevue Hill

Acknowledgement of Country

Woollahra Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Birrabirragal people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respects to elders both past and present and leaders emerging.

Message from the General Manager



Hello,
I hope everyone who works with Woollahra Council knows we care as much about your wellbeing as we do about your work.

You are important to us and your physical and mental health have a direct impact on your working life and your relationships with colleagues, friends and family. Similarly, how you feel about your work and your contribution to our organisation will impact on your wellbeing.

We have put together this Staff Wellbeing Guide to provide you with tips and resources including:

- Good hygiene and protecting your health
- Eating well
- Exercising
- Getting enough quality sleep
- Managing stress, anxiety, other mental health issues and your finances
- Where to go for help and handy resources.

At different times in our lives, our physical and mental health fluctuates. Sometimes we feel great and sometimes we don't. By checking-in with your own physical and mental wellbeing and understanding some of the steps you can take, you can boost your wellbeing and understand where to go for extra support. You can also help others by listening and offering to help or guide them to support services and resources. You and your immediate family can make use of our free, confidential counselling service **AccessEAP** any time **1800 818 728**.

In the next few weeks I will be launching and leading a *Health and Wellbeing Working Group*, with representatives from across the organisation. The Group will help coordinate our wellbeing approach in a holistic way. This will be another way to support you, as one of our most important assets.

I am grateful for the contribution you make to Woollahra Council. Our positive workplace culture is a direct result of how you look after yourself and those around you.

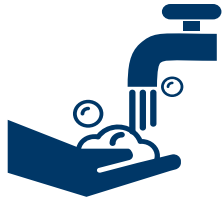
Your wellbeing deserves to be your top priority. I hope you find the Guide useful in prioritising your physical and mental wellbeing.



Craig Swift-McNair
General Manager

If you have suggestions for the next edition of this Staff Wellbeing Guide, we would love to hear from you. Please share your feedback with damian.whittle@woollahra.nsw.gov.au. This Guide is also available on the Hub.

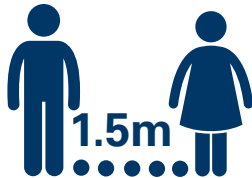
Protect yourself and others



Washing your hands is one of the simplest, yet most effective, things you can do to protect your health and the health of others.

Wash your hands regularly in warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds – or use an alcohol-based hand rub if soap isn't available

Avoid touching your face and mouth.



To avoid infection, avoid contact with someone with COVID-19 and apply rules of social distancing.

Social distancing includes:

- avoiding crowds and mass gatherings where it is hard to keep a reasonable distance from others (1.5 metres)
- avoiding small gatherings in enclosed spaces
- keeping 1.5 metres between you and other people, where possible
- not shaking hands, hugging or kissing
- not visiting vulnerable people, such as those in aged-care facilities or hospitals, babies or people with weakened immune systems
- wear a face mask when it is difficult to maintain social distancing of 1.5 metres.



Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue (and dispose of it straight away in a closed lid bin or sealed bag) or use the inside of your elbow (and immediately wash your hands).

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature, cough, runny nose, loss of smell or taste) please get tested and stay home.

Stay well. Stay informed.
For health advice and the latest updates on COVID-19 visit health.nsw.gov.au

Look after your social wellbeing

Stay connected

Some people may feel lonely while many people are working remotely and practising social distancing.



Stay connected with friends and family in person if you can.



Talk to loved ones, friends or trusted work colleagues about worries and concerns.



Engage in hobbies and enjoyable activities.

Information for parents and carers

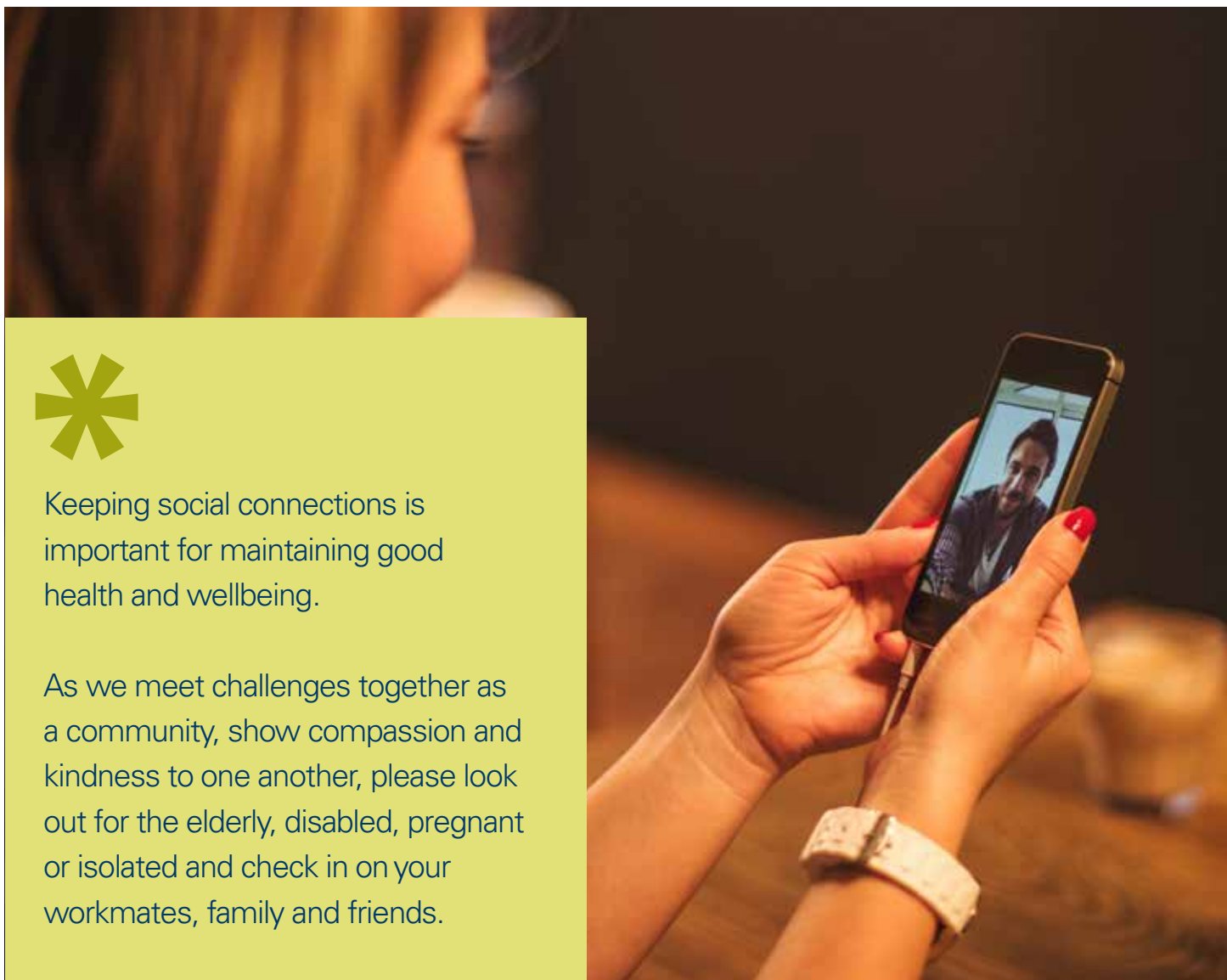
A family guide with tips to help you and your family cope can be found at: raisingchildren.net.au



Video: Talking to kids about scary stuff in the news.



Check the Black Dog Institute's website for upcoming webinars on [Navigating your Teen's Mental Health](#).



Keeping social connections is important for maintaining good health and wellbeing.

As we meet challenges together as a community, show compassion and kindness to one another, please look out for the elderly, disabled, pregnant or isolated and check in on your workmates, family and friends.

Make time for exercise

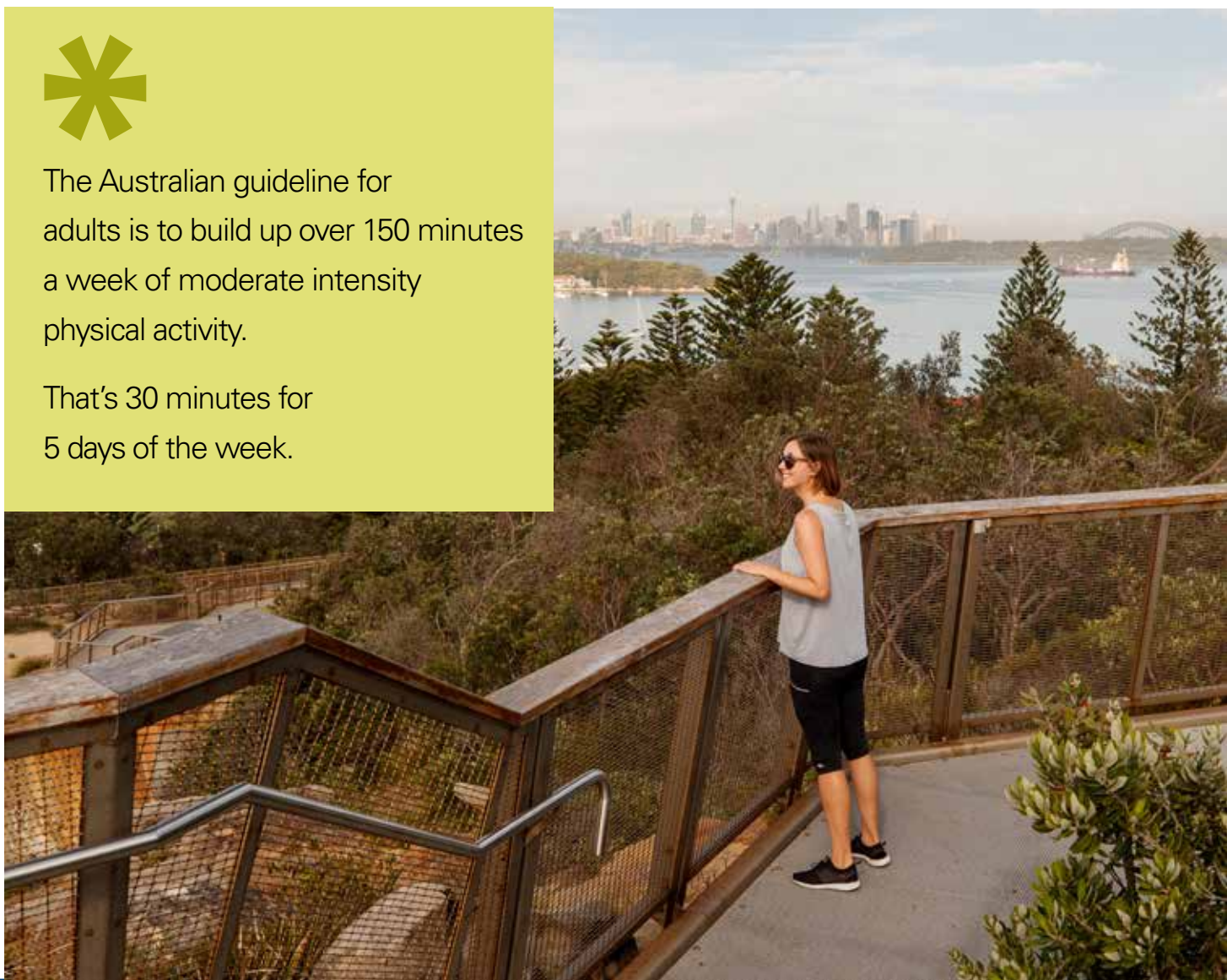
Tips for staying active (particularly if you are working from home)

- [The Heart Foundation](#) has put together some tips on exercising at home
- YouTube offers plenty of free online workouts you can do at home that best suits your fitness needs
- Try bodyweight exercises like [push-ups](#), [air-squats](#) or some resistance exercise against a wall or chair
- Stand or walk around the house when you're on the phone
- If you have a pedometer aim for 10,000 steps a day. Studies outline that it is more beneficial to do multiple shorter walks when achieving your 10,000 steps, than one long walk for the day and then remaining sedentary throughout the day.
- Free fitness coaching from NSW Health gethealthynsw.com.au



The Australian guideline for adults is to build up over 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity physical activity.

That's 30 minutes for 5 days of the week.




Gap Park, Watsons Bay

Maintain a healthy diet

Eat a rainbow!

Eating a variety of vegetables each day gives our bodies a wide range of nutrients for better health. We should eat different coloured vegetables every day because each colour carries its own set of unique health-promoting properties.

The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommends enjoying a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day and drink plenty of water.

-  1. Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties
-  2. Vegetables and legumes/beans
-  3. Fruit
-  4. Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat
-  5. Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans.



From healthy eating tips, to free programs to get you active, the Make Healthy Normal site can help you find one small change in your day that will help you (and your family) feel better and healthier for longer. It includes, support for fussy eaters, weekly meal planner, recipes and more!

makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au

How much sleep do I need?

Everyone is different, and the amount of sleep you need might be different to what your friends need. In general though:

Age	Recommended sleep
0-3 months	14 to 17 hours
4-11 months	12 to 15 hours
1-2 years	11 to 14 hours
3-5 years	10 to 13 hours
6-13 years	9 to 11 hours
14-17 years	8 to 10 hours
18-64 years	7 to 9 hours
65+ years	7 to 8 hours



Our sleeping patterns can affect how well we feel throughout the day.

If we have quality sleep, we wake up feeling refreshed. We are better able to cope with challenges and come up with better ideas, and we get along better with the people around us. In contrast, when we don't get quality sleep, we can feel fuzzy and irritable, and it can also lead to increased anxiety and depression.

Further resources on sleep:
headtohealth.gov.au/meaningful-life/physical-health/sleep

Good sleep tips:
sleephealthfoundation.org.au/good-sleep-habits



Some tips for a good night's sleep

There are many things that can be done to have a better night's sleep

- Aim to get to bed and wake up around the same time each day, including on the weekend.
- Turn off your screens (e.g. phone, TV and laptop) at least 30 minutes before bed time.
- Meals should be timed to avoid going to bed on a full stomach, but not hungry either
- Limit how much caffeine you have, including coffee, energy drinks and soft drinks.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before bed. It might make you sleepy, but you're less likely to get good, restful sleep with alcohol in your system.
- Don't have things in the bedroom that distract you from sleep.
- Getting sunlight during the day will help you to sleep better at night.
- Exercise during the day is a good way to make you tired at night.
- Your bedroom should be dark, cool and quiet.
- If you are a poor sleeper it is very important you do not spend too long in bed.

Avoid/Reduce Alcohol Consumption

The Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks recommend healthy men and women, drink no more than 10 standard drinks per week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury.

Excessive alcohol use can make it harder for your body to resist disease, increasing your risk of some illnesses.

If you are concerned about your relationship with alcohol or are looking to cut down your alcohol consumption, the Day Break app, by Hello Sunday Morning [hellosundaymorning.org](https://www.hellosundaymorning.org), and funded by the Australian Government, is a behaviour change program that supports people to have a safe relationship with alcohol.

More information, tips on how to quit and support can be found [here](#) at [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au).

Alcohol and other Drugs Support

National Alcohol and Other Drugs Hotline: **1800 250 015**

Other 24/7 support services

Counselling Online:
[counsellingonline.org.au](https://www.counsellingonline.org.au)

Family Drug Support:

1300 368 186

Lifeline: **13 11 14**

Kids Helpline: **1800 551 800**

Beyond Blue: **1300 224 636**

MensLine: **1300 789 978**

Other resources

Turning Point:

[turningpoint.org.au](https://www.turningpoint.org.au)

Alcohol and Drug Foundation:

[adf.org.au](https://www.adf.org.au)

Positive Choices:

[positivechoices.org.au](https://www.positivechoices.org.au)

Head to Health:

[headtohealth.gov.au](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au)

headspace: [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au)

ReachOut: [reachout.com](https://www.reachout.com)

Avoid/Reduce Tobacco Smoking

People with poor lung function (as a result of smoking) may be at higher risk of many health conditions and disease.

For support and more information to quit smoking visit iCanQuit [icanquit.com.au](https://www.icanquit.com.au)



Drugs and alcohol can increase your risk of poor health which leaves you open to infection. For some, drug use, smoking or consumption of alcohol may be used to deal with emotions. If you feel overwhelmed talk to a health worker or counsellor.

Limit your media exposure

You may be overwhelmed by the volumes of information coming at you via the news, online sources, your workmates, family and friends.

Limit media exposure

Today's 24-hour news cycle can make it difficult to turn away from the TV, radio, or news feeds, but research has shown that excess media exposure to coverage of stressful events can result in negative mental health outcomes. Use trusted media outlets to gather the information you need, then turn them off.

Access reliable information

Accessing reliable information during an infectious disease outbreak will help ensure you and your family members are taking appropriate steps to stay healthy. Stay up-to-date about developments related to the infectious disease outbreak by using a reliable and accurate source of health-related information.



Maintain positive mental health

Head to Health is committed to providing Australians with trusted information and digital support to help people maintain good mental health.

Tips to maintain good mental health:

Set up a daily routine

Plan activities that are fun (such as reading, watching movies, hobbies) and that give you a sense of achievement (such as cleaning, completing work tasks, learning a new skill). Spend time with friends or family.

Stay positive and remember:

Unpleasant feelings and challenging times pass..

What you say to yourself is important. Listen to the things you are saying to yourself and change negative comments to be more helpful and realistic.

Eat well

Plan and eat a variety of nutritious meals.



Meditation workshop with staff

Stay active

Create an exercise routine that can be completed at home, to maintain physical fitness and reduce stress.

Stay connected

Maintain regular contact with friends and family via phone, chat, email, or video conferencing.

Access Support

Don't hesitate to reach out to the many services available if you are feeling overwhelmed or low.

Double Bay



Tools for mindfulness

Mindfulness simply involves being present and bringing your attention to just one thing at a time. This may be your breath. It may be your thoughts. It may even be a big blockbuster action movie.

When you are totally present and paying attention you are not thinking about all the things you are worried about.

RAW Mind Coach is an online evidence-based program that aims to develop crucial skills to support the resilience and mental health of people.

It was originally designed to support those in the most challenging roles (paramedics, 000 call takers and other NSW ambulance workers).

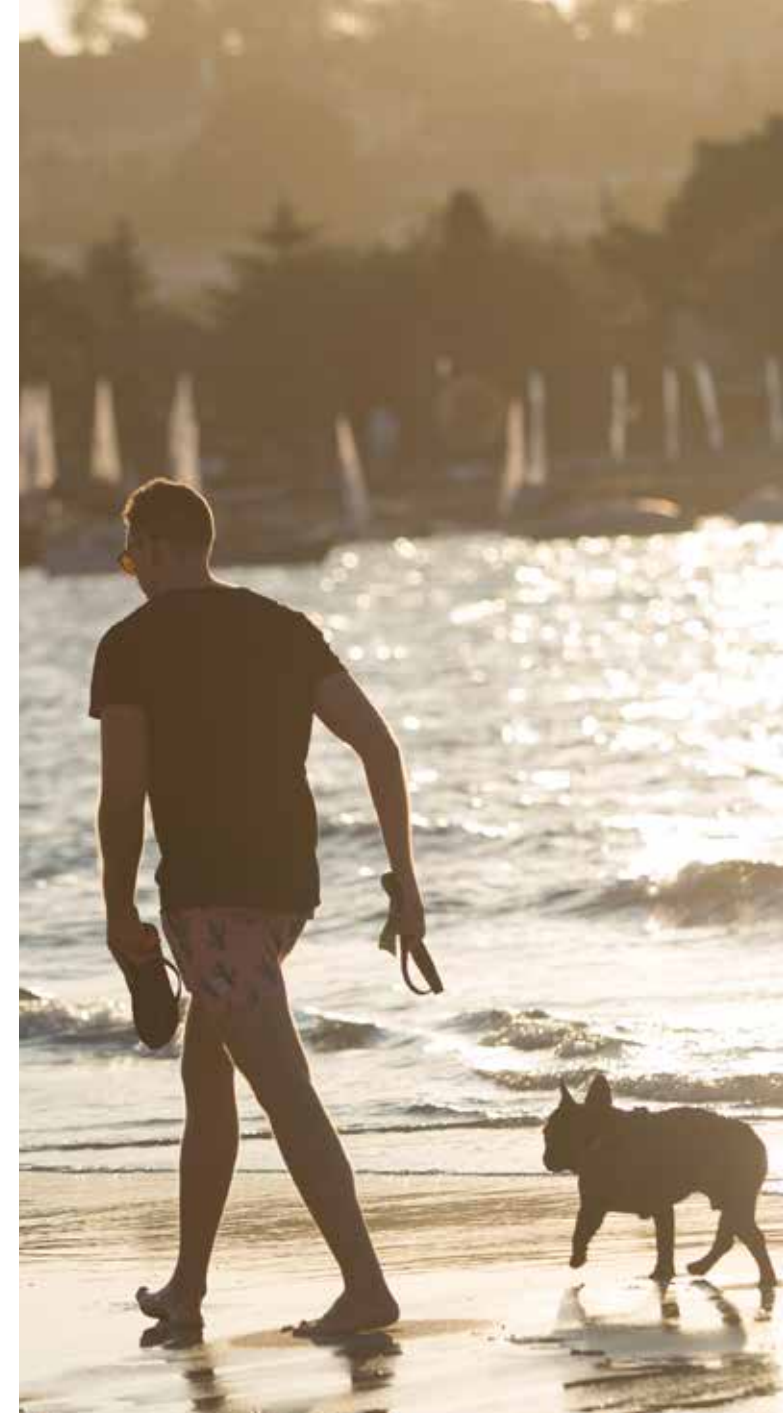


This short, simple mindfulness exercise will help you ground your mind and body, whilst connecting with the present moment.



Rather than engaging in a long and tiring mental tug-of-war, discover better ways of interacting with stubborn thoughts. This short, video is another snippet from the e-learning program

Rose Bay



Financial wellbeing

Financial safety can bring security and peace of mind. Combined with leisure time and fun activities, it can have a positive effect on wellbeing. Being able to work and pay bills regularly can ease pressure, though not everyone is able to do that.

Financial problems can cause stress and can have a significant impact on your mental health. For some people, the financial pressures of life may seem impossible to overcome, but there is help and support available.

- National Debt Helpline **ndh.org.au** offers free financial counselling. The hotline is open from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Call **1800 007 007**
- Money Smart **moneysmart.gov.au**, by the Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC), helps to improve the personal finances of Australians. The website provides information and tools to help people make smart financial decisions.

Other resources:

- Head to Health, Finances: **headtohealth.gov.au/meaningful-life/feeling-safe-stable-and-secure/finances**



Our EAP Program

Woollahra Council offers a free, confidential counselling service for all employees and their immediate family through AccessEAP.

Trained counsellors and psychologists can help you identify, explore and manage issues that are impacting on your life, such as grief and bereavement, family and financial issues, stress or simply looking at maximising your potential.

You can contact AccessEAP any time on **1800 818 728** to make an appointment at a time that suits you. Six sessions are available (EAP can request more through HR on your behalf).

AccessEAP Employee Portal has lots of useful resources to help you look after yourself and others. Check out the weekly blog and monthly newsletter for tips on maintaining connections, resilience, motivation or managing stress. You can tune into guided meditation or a “Coping with COVID-19” webinar. Register online to activate an account.

AccessEAP’s Resource Library includes a variety of resources on personal and workplace wellbeing with topics such as managing conflict, relationships, mindfulness in the workplace, sleep and self-care.

The Managers Hotline is there to support supervisors with staff who are facing mental health challenges. Issues can often arise very quickly, EAP can assist in having sensitive and productive conversations. You can access more information on the Employer Portal or can call them on **1800 818 728**.

AccessEAP also offer an app called **EAP In Focus** which has all of the online resources, plus more. To download, go to the Apple App Store or Google Play.



[Download for Apple](#)



[Download for Android](#)



Support services

Beyond Blue

The Beyond Blue Support Service offers short term counselling and referrals by phone and webchat:

1300 22 4636

**[beyondblue.org.au/get-support/
get-immediate-support](https://beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support)**

Lifeline

Lifeline telephone, text and webchat services will continue as normal throughout the COVID-19 virus:

Call: **13 11 14** (24 hours/7 days)

Text: **0477 13 11 14** (6pm – midnight AEDT, 7 nights)

Chat online: **lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat**

(7pm – midnight, 7 nights)

For more information: **lifeline.org.au**

NSW Mental Health Line

NSW Mental Health line offers professional help and advice and referrals to local mental health services.

Call: **1800 011 511**

For more information: **[health.nsw.gov.au/
mentalhealth/Pages/Mental-Health-Line.aspx](https://health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/Mental-Health-Line.aspx)**

Domestic and family violence support

1800RESPECT is a 24-hour national sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling line for anyone who has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence.

1800 737 732

NSW Suicide Call Back Service

NSW Suicide call back service is a nationwide service that provides professional 24/7 telephone and online counselling to people who are affected by suicide

Call: **1300 659 467**

suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Black Dog Institute

Offering webinars in an effort to reach out to those who have trouble attending or accessing face to face sessions **blackdoginstitute.org.au**



Find Support

For Adults

Lifeline: 13 11 14

lifeline.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

mensline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

suicidecallbackservice.org.au

For Youth

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 **kidshelpline.com.au**

headspace: 1800 650 890 **headspace.org.au**

ReachOut: **reachout.com.au**

Other resources

Head to Health: mental health portal

headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal

lifeinmindaustralia.com.au

SANE: online forums **sane.org**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:

healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au

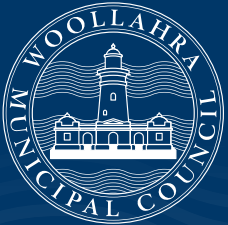
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex:

1800 184 527 **qlife.org.au**

Culturally and linguistically diverse:

mhima.org.au

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